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EASTERN EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCER

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7 August 1972Croatian Nationalism Flares

Ten persons were arrested last Thursday for Croatian nationalist demonstrations at the funeral of former republic party secretary Piro Pirker. He was one of the three top Croatian party officials forced to resign last December when Tito cracked down on that republic's nationalist excesses [REDACTED]

The following day, nationalist tempers again flared when, following a month's recess, the trial of four prominent student leaders resumed [REDACTED] One of the defendants, Drazen Budisa, did not help his case when, in an emotional outburst to the court, he labeled political developments in Croatia over the last six months as "neostalinist for one thing, and terrorist, for another." Budisa's outburst and his refusal to answer any questions led to a bitter fight among the defense attorneys over how to present their case.

Meanwhile, the trial of Ivan Cicak, the former student prorector of Zagreb University, added to the pandemonium. Cicak withdrew from one of his defense attorneys the right to speak for him. The incident stemmed from a suggestion by the prosecution that all the defendants are unbalanced; the defense responded with a flat "no," adding that "only Cicak had sought psychiatric help before entering politics."

Friday's proceedings adjourned to await the appearance at today's session of qualified psychiatrists and psychologists to testify about the defendant's mental health. [REDACTED]

Church Activity Criticized

The state is not winning the struggle with religion for the hearts and minds of all young Yugoslavs. Both Roman Catholic and Serbian Orthodox church activities are

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under fire as being "undesirable and harmful" by officials in the province of Vojvodian. Particularly offensive to local authorities is the success clergymen are having in encouraging families to send their children to religious schools and activities. Actually, this is not a new phenomenon. Last year's resurgence of Croatian nationalism was heavily infused with expressions of support for Roman Catholicism. As a result, government and party officials have been trying to counter the appeal of church-related activities.

According to the Yugoslav news agency Tanjug, youth participation in church sponsored activity ranges from 20 to 80 percent in Croatia. Furthermore, Tanjug depicts the Catholic church as the main culprit, organizing "discussions, antisocialist lectures, teaparties (sic), sports competitions, (as well as) free tourist excursions to places of historical interest."

Tanjug chastizes secular school officials for not taking an interest in similar outside activity. The curriculum itself is also criticized because "not enough is taught about the phenomenon of religion on a scientific basis." Criticism of the church does not appear to indicate a new wave of repression against organized religion in Yugoslavia, but local officials may feel the need to criticize religious activity in order to assure Belgrade they are on their toes.

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